

GREAT LAKES REGION RUNWAY SAFETY PROGRAM



The FAA has a program aimed at preventing runway incursions and surface incidents. Everyone's cooperation is necessary to prevent serious accidents from happening.

If we don't learn from prior mistakes, we won't make any progress. In December, 2000, 5 of the 6 runway incursions in the Great Lakes Region were the direct result of snow removal operations. Here are a few examples:

"The snow team was told to exit and hold short of Runway 5-23 and did acknowledge. One aircraft landed and exited. A second aircraft was on approximately 1/8 mile final when the snow team was observed on the departure end of Runway 23. The second aircraft was issued a go-around and the snow team was told...."

"A pickup truck and a snowplow drove on Runway 27L at the departure end while Aircraft was rolling out after landing...."

"The broom team was instructed to hold short of Runway 18, the driver acknowledged clearance but failed to hold short...."

(Italics reflect substitution for privacy)

HOW TO REDUCE VEHICLE/PEDESTRIAN DEVIATIONS CAUSED BY SNOW REMOVAL EQUIPMENT OPERATORS.

We need to focus on effective coordination and communication among all parties involved in snow removal (controllers, users, drivers, etc.) to heighten situational awareness, and to prevent conflict with airport operations during reduced visibility caused by winter operations.

The maintenance of a safe operating environment requires everyone's involvement and vigilance to eliminate potential safety hazards. FAA's goal is to reduce the rate, number, and severity of runway incursions.

NOTE:

FAA Advisory Circular 150/5200-30A, Airport Winter Safety and Operations, provides guidance to prepare for the winter snow removal season.

10 EASY STEPS DRIVERS CAN TAKE TO AVOID RUNWAY INCURSIONS

1. A thorough airport knowledge, particularly taxiways and runways, since some signs may be covered with snow.
2. Check NOTAMS/ATIS.
3. Listen carefully and transmit clearly.
4. Read back hold-short instructions.
5. Write down clearances.
6. Maintain situational awareness.
7. Admit it when you are lost.
8. Understand signs, lighting and markings.
9. Never assume anything.
10. Take extra care due to low visibility conditions during winter operations.

FAA GREAT LAKES REGION RUNWAY SAFETY PROGRAM OFFICE



Reducing Runway Incursions

FOCUS: SNOW REMOVAL

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Snow Removal During Airport Operations

To prevent runway incursions related to winter airport operations, it is recommended that every airport subject to snowfall have:

A snow removal team that can make decisions; reduce response time; and maximize availability of runways, taxiways, etc. The makeup of the team will depend upon an airport's needs.

A snow removal plan (formal or informal) that addresses the procedures, equipment, and materials to be used; assigns movement area priorities; and defines responsibilities.

A snow disposal site and haul route, if needed, selected prior to the winter season. Access to the site should not interfere with aircraft and navigational aids, and the haul route should not cross movement areas, if possible.

SNOW REMOVAL EQUIPMENT IN THE MOVEMENT AREA - BASIC GUIDELINES

- Limit equipment and times as necessary for maintaining airport operations.
- Enter airport movement areas only with authorization from air traffic control.
- Give aircraft the right-of-way at all times.
- Use lights and warning signals for night operations.

TRAINING MINIMA

- Train personnel in equipment operations, communication techniques and terminology, marking, lighting, signs and the airport layout .
- Make practice runs with the equipment in typical operational scenarios, before allowing access to the movement areas.



WHAT CAN THE DRIVER CONTRIBUTE?

Detailed investigations have identified three major areas where you, the driver, can help:

MAINTAIN SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

- Review current airport surface conditions before starting snow removal operations.
- Know where you are on the airport and where you are going at all times.
- Keep airport/taxi diagrams readily available during snow removal operations.
- Be on the alert for aircraft, vehicle and pedestrian activity.

IMPROVE COMMUNICATIONS

For effective driver/controller communications make sure you:

- Are in contact with the control tower, if open.
- Monitor and announce position and intention over the Common Traffic Advisory Frequency or be under the control of a radio-equipped vehicle, if there is no tower or it is closed.
- Work out a method of signaling to clear the runway, etc. ahead of time.

- Listen before you transmit. Monitor radio communications to establish a “mental picture” of airport activity, if able.
- Think before keying your transmitter. Keep communications with the controller clear and concise.
- Never assume. Ensure you understand all instructions.
- Read back runway hold-short instructions and clearances verbatim.

FOLLOW PROPER PROCEDURES

Proven and effective procedures are imperative for safe ground operations.

- Limit conversations when on runways; avoid unnecessary communication.
- Be vigilant, especially when on or near runways.
- Be aware of current airport surface conditions.
- If lost, notify Air Traffic Control immediately. If in doubt, ask!
- Make your equipment visible by appropriate use of lights.
- Insure your vehicle's radio operates properly and use radio headsets and noise-canceling microphones as needed.
- Use good judgment should radio failure occur.
- Never stop on an active runway.

**FAA GREAT LAKES REGION
RUNWAY SAFETY PROGRAM OFFICE, AGL-1R
2300 E. DEVON AVENUE
DES PLAINES, ILLINOIS 60018
www.faa.gov/runwaysafety**